

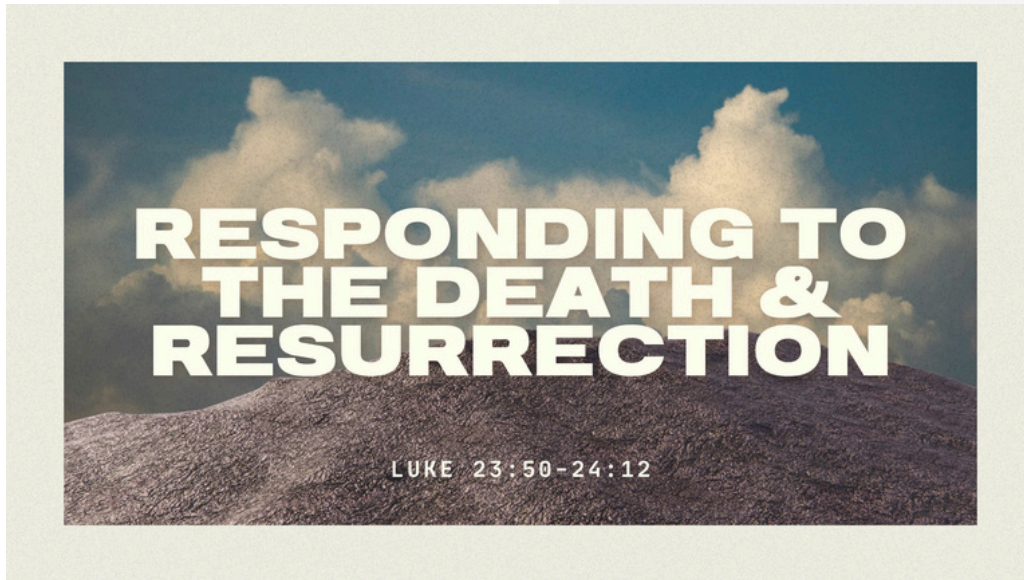
CCLEB SERMON

NOTES

SUNDAY APRIL 5, 2026
LUKE 23:50-24:12

PASTOR DUANE MILLER

RESPONDING TO THE DEATH & RESURRECTION



Good morning! **He is Risen!**



What a joy it is to celebrate the resurrection of Jesus with you. Today we are going to open God's word and look at the resurrection story as told by Luke.

Because we are celebrating the resurrection of Jesus, and discussing how people respond to the resurrection, if during our time together you hear anything related to Jesus being risen you are free to say "He is risen indeed".

We are going to read this passage in its entirety and as we work through this passage, I want you to listen carefully to the responses we see. Not theology statements, but responses. How people respond to the events surround Jesus' death and resurrection.

Luke 23:50-24:12.

I recently attended a funeral and burial that really moved me. When the speaking portion ended many family and friends picked up shovels, filled wheelbarrows and personally covered the lowered casket. They even replaced the original sod.

That was not the tradition that I grew up with, and their response added meaning and closure. It was deeply honoring and it was also very practical response. The grave needed closed.

In **Luke 23:52-53** we see Joseph of Arimathea, respond to Jesus' death in a way that was honoring, costly and practical.

Luke hasn't introduced us before to this Joseph, but what we learn about him here speaks volumes.

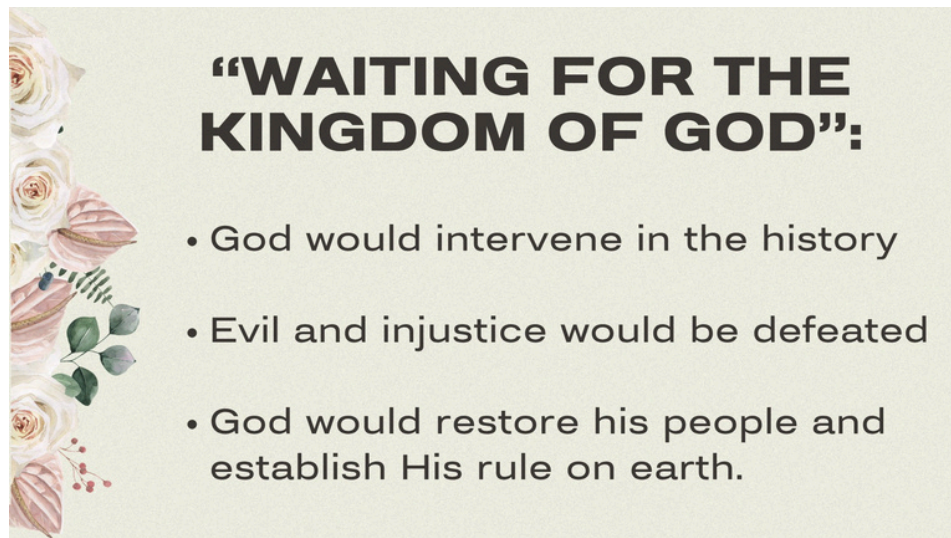
Verse 50-51 tells us that he was "a member of the High Council, (Sanhedrin)" a man of social and spiritual status, education and power.

Luke tells us that he was "a good and righteous man". From the context of the Old Testament that statement means Joseph of Arimathea shunned evil, acted justly, and corrected injustices.

And Luke also tells us, "He had not consented to the plan (to kill Jesus)."

And most importantly Luke tells us that Joseph was "waiting for the Kingdom of God". That phrase matters.

In first century, Judaism "waiting for the Kingdom of God" meant believing that:



“WAITING FOR THE KINGDOM OF GOD”:

- God would intervene in the history
- Evil and injustice would be defeated
- God would restore his people and establish His rule on earth.

To "wait for the Kingdom of God" meant recognizing that the current kingdom is not God's Kingdom - and that only God's reign will fix what was broken.

That means Joseph - a respected spiritual leader - had a spiritual discontent with the religious system he helped lead.

Now the text doesn't tell us Joseph's inner motivation - but it tells us what he did. He went to Pilate and asked for Jesus' body. Let that sink in. But think about this question: What would it have cost Joseph to ask Pilate for the body of a labeled blasphemer and an enemy of the state?

Would it have cost him his reputation, his social status? Maybe even his position? Joseph's was a "costly response".



1. COSTLY RESPONSE

John 19:38 tells us that Joseph had been a “secret disciple” of Jesus up to this point. A disciple meaning he followed the teachings and ways of Jesus. But something about the cross moved him from private belief to public action.

Joseph wanted Jesus to receive a respectful burial.



2. HONORING/ RESPECTFUL RESPONSE

Timing mattered. Sabbath was approaching quickly so Joseph took Jesus' body down from the cross, “wrapped it in long sheets of linen”, and laid Jesus' body in a nearby “new tomb”. “New” meaning “recently carved - never used”. This was an honoring response. A very practical response - Jesus needed buried.



3. PRACTICAL RESPONSE

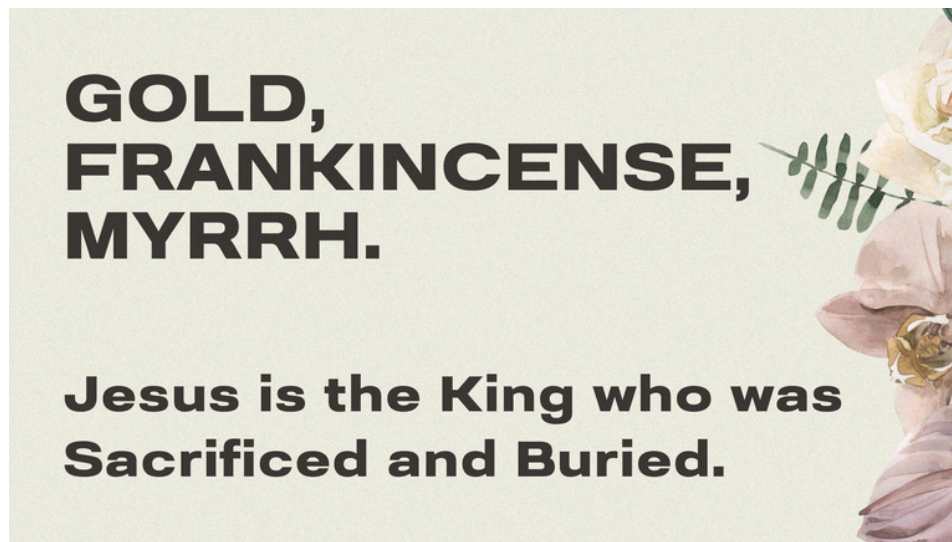
Luke is intentional with one word here - "body" from **23:52**. Joseph didn't ask Pilate for Jesus, Joseph asked Pilate for Jesus' body, then Joseph took the body off the cross, wrapped the body in linen and then laid the body in the tomb. Jesus was dead! Joseph's response testifies that Jesus was dead.

And continuing with the word "body" we see in **Luke 23:55** the women from Galilee saw where the body was laid. This means that the women too attest that Jesus was dead.

And the women prepared spices and ointments for Jesus' body. Their response was a costly, loving expression of devotion. This also would have provided meaningful closure.

What were these spices and ointments? It may very well have included myrrh brought by the wise men.

The wise men's three gifts carry great symbolism and tell Jesus' story. The gift of gold was a kingly gift. Frankincense was costly and was used in sacrifices, and expensive myrrh was used for burial preparation. And together the three gifts symbolized that Jesus is the King who was sacrificed and buried. Gold, Frankincense, Myrrh.



But the ladies in **Luke 23** didn't get to use that myrrh... you know why? **Jesus was risen!** Let's finish the story.

Picture the women in a rocky hillside outside Jerusalem's city walls watching Joseph of Arimathea bury Jesus just as the sun was setting that good Friday. The sunset ushered in the Sabbath, which meant then that the women needed to wait till first light Sunday to put the spices and ointments on Jesus' body. Imagine what those thirty-six hours felt like for them - the grief, the fear, hopelessness?

Luke tells us in **24:1-3** the women returned early Sunday morning, they found the tombstone rolled away, and the body missing. They were "puzzled".

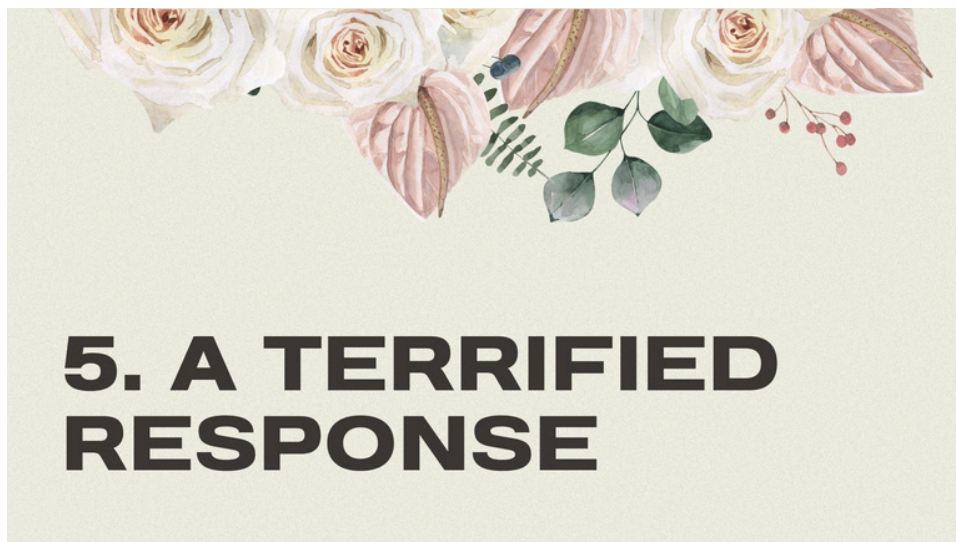


While they were trying to figure out what happened **Luke 24:4**. Two men in “dazzling robes” suddenly appeared. The Greek word for “dazzling” paints the picture of their robes as “lighting bright”.



For clarity’s sake, we know from later in the chapter in **24:23** when this story is being retold, Luke identifies the two men in lighting bright robes as “angels”.

Luke 24:5. And in response to the two angels suddenly appearing in “lighting white” robes we see a “terrified” response.



In their terror, they dropped to the ground face down.

There was a similar response in **Matthew 28:3** from the soldiers who were guarding Jesus’ tomb. They also fell to the ground and fainted when they saw the angel whose face shown like “lightning”. I must point out that the ladies at the tomb did better than the soldiers in response to “lightening brightness” at least the women didn’t faint.

This falling to the ground in response to “lightening brightness is a curious repetition from elsewhere in the bible.

The prophet Daniel in **Daniel 10:6, 9**, dropped to the ground in response to “lighting brightness”. Daniel’s scene, pay attention, is the beginning of a three-chapter long prophecy describing a future of unseen spiritual wars lying behind earthly empires which culminates in intense end-times conflict, but God ultimately delivers His people and raises the dead.

SUMMARY OF DANIEL 10-12

A future of unseen spiritual wars lying behind earthly empires which culminates in intense end-times conflict, but God ultimately delivers His people and **raises the dead.**

Daniel 12:2. And the beginning of that long three-chapter prophecy that ends with the resurrection of the saints starts with an angel who flashed like lightning. And lightning brightness was seen on the angels at Jesus' resurrection - not once but twice. The apostle Paul later affirms this resurrection of the saints that Daniel is referring to is based on Jesus' resurrection in. **1 Corinthians 15:20, 23.** I love the connections in bible!!

Then the angels spoke to the women. At the end of **Luke 24:5** the men in lighting bright robes asked them, "Why are you seeking the living One among the dead?"

The women were looking for a "body", but there was not "body" because now there was a "living One".

I love the angels' matter of fact-ness in **verse 6**, "He isn't here, He is risen (from the dead)".

And then the angels proceeded to remind the women of the prophetic words Jesus spoke in **Luke 9:22.** And just to emphasize the accuracy of Jesus prophecy note that all those things came true: "suffer", "rejected", "killed", "raised".

The angel reminded the ladies of Jesus' own words and Luke tells us in **24:8** they "remembered his words".

In **verse 9** Luke tells us the women then "rushed back from the tomb to tell his eleven disciples and everyone else what happened." This was an excited response.



And in **verse 10** we finally are told who three of these women were. Notable mention was "Joanna" - with wife of King Herod's business manager. Mary Magdalene - the women that Jesus cast out seven demons. And Mary was the mother of James the lesser - who the Chosen Series calls "little James".

The importance of three names was that in Greek, Roman and Jewish culture, three witnesses was enough to establish truth. The flip side of this scene though is that in all three of the biased Greek, Roman, and Jewish cultures the witness of women was not taken seriously - women were not seen as reliable witnesses.

This adds to the credibility of the resurrection of Jesus because if someone was making up this story they most likely would have never had women as the first witnesses to Jesus' resurrection.

It also emphasizes the value of women in Jesus new kingdom. New King, new kingdom, new rules.

But nonetheless - the eleven disciples, acting like the secular Greeks and Romans - did not accept the women's witness. **Verse 11**

To give a picture of what the word "nonsense" meant in Greek; - in contemporary literature, the Greek word for "nonsense" was used to describe the "delirious speech" of someone with a fever or illness.

This response as "nonsense" of the eleven disciples was a "dismissive response". The disciples dismissed the witness of the empty tomb, the witness of the dazzling white angels, and the witness of the women.



It was a "quick-to-judge response" - I've done that-based on my vast wisdom and experience I have judged something quickly - and often incorrectly. That's what we see here.



It was an “incredulous response” - This is unwilling to believe, even though Jesus told them it would happen exactly as it did.



And I would be remiss to not also state that this dismissive, quick to judge and incredulous response is based on arrogance - “I know better” ... so, it was also a



The wisdom of the world wants you to believe that the empty tomb is all “nonsense”. And let me add... it was “worldly response”.

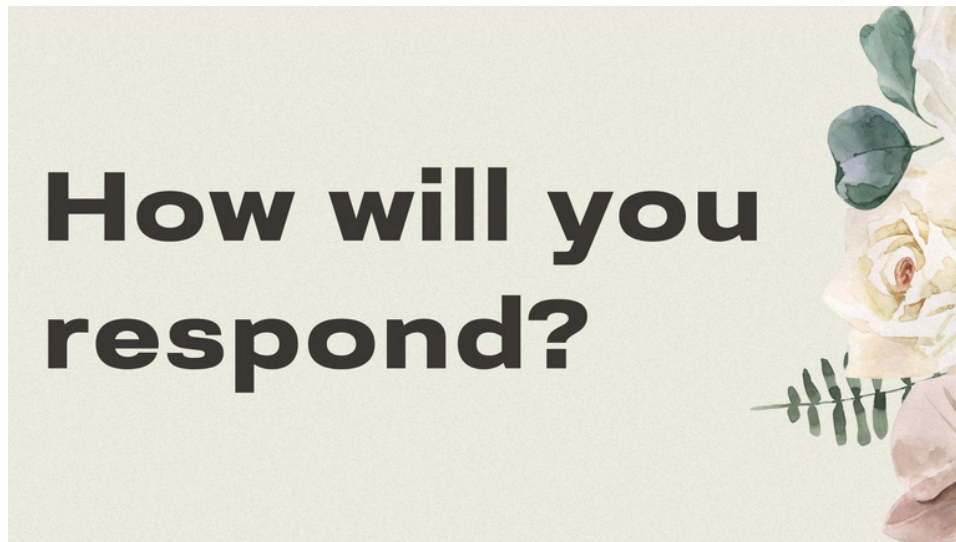


But something was churning inside one of the eleven - Peter. Peter has had his own journey with Jesus - sometimes up and down... a more than once Peter responded too quickly, and Jesus called him on that. So, after the women reported on their story and Peter and the others dismissed their witness perhaps a little flame of humility started burning in Peter.

That little flame inside Peter ignited a fire and here's what we see Peter do. **Luke 24:12** He ran and saw the empty tomb; he saw the same linen wrappings and Luke tells us that he went away "wondering" / "marveling". Not believing yet, not understanding yet, but wondering".

Thoughts for your meditation and application:

So...



Having just read and considered the resurrection account in Luke, I want us to pause and take in the full picture of what we have seen.

Luke has carefully walked us through a wide spectrum of responses to the death and resurrection of Jesus. These responses are from real people responding to real events in real time, with real emotions, real costs, and real consequences.

The Holy Spirit in inspiring this account thru Luke, preserved these responses for a reason. Somewhere in this story we find ourselves. We identify with one or more of the responses.

We have seen Joseph of Arimathea a secret disciple, step out of the shadows with a public, costly, honoring, practical response. He risked his reputation, he risked his position, he risked being associated with a condemned criminal. Why? Because being a disciple of Jesus eventually reaches a point where living in secret is no longer an option. **Matthew 10:32**

We saw the devoted women disciples- grieving, faithful, courageous, respond with love and honor, sacrifice. They prepared spices and returned to the tomb early Sunday morning. And they became the first witnesses to the resurrection. God entrusted the most world-shattering truth in history to people that world did not believe to be credible.

1 Corinthians 1:7 says "God chose the foolish in the world to shame the wise.

We also saw responses most of us can relate to: Confusion, Fear, prideful, quick-to-judge, dismissive and incredulous. And these are the ones Jesus personally disciplined - and yet in the face of evidence - the disciples struggled to believe.

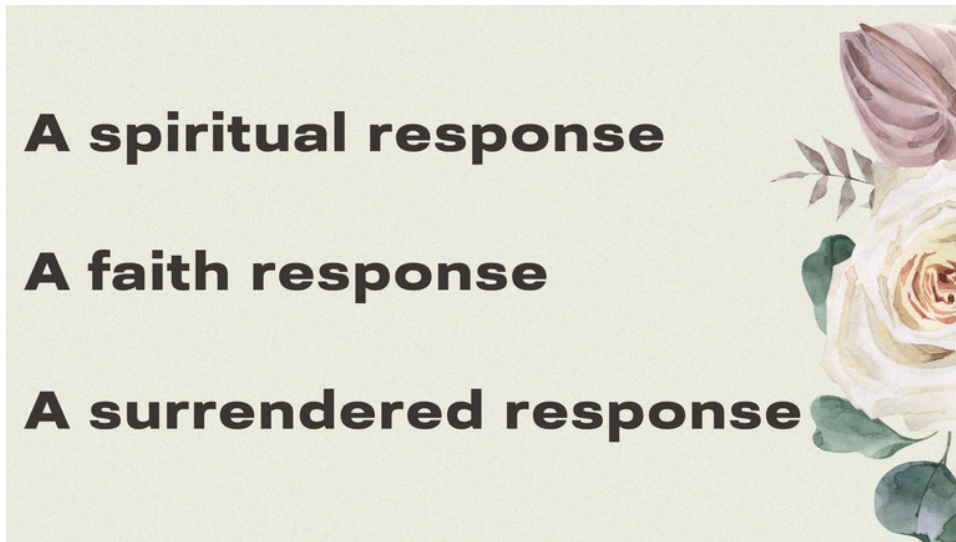
Sometimes it is harder to believe than not to.

And this is why Peter's response at the end of the passage is so important to all of us. He doesn't believe yet, he doesn't understand yet, but he runs to the tomb. He looks in the empty tomb, sees the linen wrappings. And Luke tells us he went away "wondering".

Are you wondering if the resurrection is really true?

Wondering is often the bridge between unbelief and faith. **Hebrews 11:6**. Anyone who comes to God must believe that he exists and that he rewards those who earnestly seek him. This "wondering" was Peter seeking.

But as we stand here 2000 years later considering all these responses, one response is missing. A spiritual response - a faith response - a surrendered response.



So let me ask you some questions: Are you responding like Joseph of Arimathea - quietly believing, but mostly hidden? Is the Spirit drawing you out of those shadows?

Are you responding like the women respectful, sad, and have unanswered questions?

Or are you like Peter - something stirred inside him and he was compelled to investigate. And what he saw made him wonder and marveled.

Or are you standing outside the tomb looking for a body while the angels in lightening bright robes ask the timeless question? Why are you seeking the Living One among the dead?

My friends - Jesus is not among the dead; he is among the living. Jesus is alive. He is risen.

Roman 10:9 says "If you confess with your mouth that Jesus is Lord and believe in your heart that God raised him from the dead, you will be saved."

How will you respond? **He is Risen!**



BONUS

CONTENT:

Luke 23:50. More on Joseph of Arimathea.

Matthew 27:57-60 He is described as “rich”, and a “disciple of Jesus”. And the tomb where he places Jesus was “his own new tomb.” This fulfills Isa 53:9 “a rich man’s tomb”.

Mark 15:43 says he was “a prominent member of the High Council”. And he took “courage”.

John 19:38-42 describes Joseph as initially as “a secret disciple of Jesus” who “feared the Jewish leaders” and that he worked together with Nicodemus to bury Jesus.

Interesting “Arimathea” is probably in “Ramah” – where the prophecy regarding Rachel in **Jeremiah 31:15** is “weeping for her children... who are no more”. This prophecy prophetically describes King Herod’s destruction of children.

23:51 If Joseph was a disciple that means he followed the teachings and ways of Jesus. It would make sense then why Joseph was “waiting for the Kingdom of God”. Jesus taught a lot about the Kingdom of God.

24:6 The angel’s response was a continuation of their question in **verse 5**. “He isn’t here” meaning “among the dead” – rather He/Jesus is among the living.